MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE COMMISSION OF FINE ARTS
HELD IN WASHINGTON, D. C., FRIDAY, OCTOBER 20, 1939

The third meeting of the Commission of Fine Arts during the fiscal year 1940 was held in its office in the Interior Department Building on Friday, October 20, 1939. The following members were present;

Mr. Clarke, Chairman,
Mr. Savage,
Mr. Borie,
Mr. Shepley,
Mr. Manship,
also H. P. Caemmerer,

Secretary and Administrative Officer.

The meeting was called to order at 9:30 a. m.

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING: The Minutes of the meeting held, September 15, 1939, were approved.

2. MR. MOORE'S BIRTHDAY: The Commission requested the Chairman to send a telegram of congratulations to Mr. Moore, the 20th of October being his 84th birthday. The Chairman accordingly sent the following telegram:

Mr. Charles Moore,
Gig Harbor, Washington.

The Commission of Fine Arts, assembled in Washington on October twentieth, send hearty and sincere congratulations upon this your Eighty-fourth Birthday. It is particularly significant to your colleagues on the Commission to have chosen this particular day to deliberate concerning important developments in the plan of Washington which you materially aided to preserve over a quarter of a century.

William A. Delano joins us in sending felicitations.

Eugene F. Savage
Paul Manship
Henry R. Shepley
Charles L. Borie, Jr.
William F. Lamb
Gilmore D. Clarke

Mr. Clarke read a copy of a letter of congratulations that he had sent to Mr. Moore. (Exhibit A)

3. PLAN OF WASHINGTON: The secretary submitted to the Commission a memorandum (Exhibit B) in which he called attention to the activities of a number of architects in the Washington Chapter of the American Institute of Architects who recently derided the L'Enfant and McMillan Plans for Washington and are arranging to send an exhibition throughout the country under the auspices of the American Federation of Arts.

It was decided that if that Commission wishes to send out an exhibition on Washington the Commission of Fine Arts would cooperate.

4. SHIPSTEAD-LUCE ACT SUBMISSIONS: The secretary submitted Application No. 789 for altering the exterior of 120 Maryland Avenue, N. E., so that the third story windows would be similar to the second story windows. The Commission inspected the design and approved it.

Lafayette Building. Application No. 790 was received from the Inspector of Buildings together with a set of blueprints of the proposed Lafayette Building to be erected at 811 Vermont Avenue, N. W. The Commission decided that since the architects, A. R. Clas Associates, wish to submit a model, it would be inadvisable to approve the plans for the building now. The secretary was requested to notify the Building Inspector accordingly. (Exhibit C)

(Mr. Clas objected strenously to having the plans held up until November 17th, stating that it would mean thousands of dollars loss, since work on the building would have to stop immediately; whereas it has cost them $24,000 to carry out the recommendations of the Commission made at the September meeting. Chairman Clarke thereupon released the plans for issuance of a permit by the Building Inspector, and with the understanding that minor suggestions might be made after inspecting the model on November 17th.)

5. DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA ARMORY: Captain John A. Persons, Assistant Engineer Commissioner of the District of Columbia, and Mr. Nathan C. Wyeth,

Municipal Architect, submitted a design and model for the District of Columbia Armory to be built at the end of East Capitol Street.

Particular attention was given to the question of material to be used for the exterior walls. Mr. Clarke called attention to protests that had been received from Citizens Associations (Exhibit D) recommending the use of granite.

Mr. Wyeth said the authorization for the building amounts to only $2,700,000 and it is not enough money for granite. The Commission showed Mr. Wyeth samples of glazed brick such as was used by Mr. Shepley for the New York General Hospital and the other a dark glazed brick that looks like granite, which Mr. Shepley used for the Massachusetts General Hospital. Mr. Shepley said the dark gray brick matched Chelmsford granite very well. Also he said that he has been giving study to this question of glazed brick to match granite for a period of ten years. The samples indicated that the results were very satisfactory and the members of the Commission were pleased to see them. Mr. Shepley said further that this glazed brick gives the building a monumental appearance, costs much less than granite and half as much as limestone. Mr. Borie said he felt the pointing would become black but Mr. Shepley replied: "If you use a perfectly smooth pointing material it does not catch the soot and the joints will not be darker than shown. I developed this scheme with the brick company."

Mr. Wyeth submitted a sample of cheap grade of gray brick (mud colored and without life) which would cost $30 per thousand. Mr. Wyeth said that he could not afford to pay $74 per thousand, the price of the glazed brick. Mr. Wyeth pointed out that the Armory Building has been enlarged from its original design due to the fact that it is now to serve also as a sports center and it would be necessary for him to build the structure for 30 cents per cubic foot.

The Commission disapproved the use of cheap brick for the Armory, stating that this brick will set a standard for public buildings at the end of East Capitol Street.

The Commission then considered the roofing material. Mr. Wyeth submitted a sample of corrugated asbestos protected metal material, aluminum painted. Mr. Clarke said he had seen this on the Floyd Bennett Airport Buildings and it looks all right. Captain Persons said it was used at West Point with satisfactory results. The Commission approved the use of it and pointed out that the roofing material is impermanent and needs replacing after a period of years; also that there are numerous monumental buildings that have inexpensive roofing, for instance, tin roofing; also that a roof does not set the standard for a building. The Commission therefore suggested to Mr. Wyeth that he go over the estimates and consider them quantitatively with a view to effecting a saving that would be sufficient to permit the use of glazed brick. The following statement by Mr. Shepley was adopted as expressing the views of the Commission of Fine Arts in this matter:

> In the matter of material for the building, the Commission recommend that it be constructed either in limestone or granite. The Commission would not be willing to consider using brick unless it is glazed brick which matches granite of the kind of which there is a sample in the office of the Commission, because this brick has a similar monumental quality. The Commission would not be willing to approve either red brick or shale brick and call attention to the fact that the Armory will set the standard for public buildings at the end of East Capitol Street.

Mr. Manship urged that Mr. Wyeth set aside one per cent of the cost of the building for sculptural adornment, the same as is being done by the Supervising Architects Office, which also makes provision for paintings and other decorations. Mr. Savage pointed out that there is a good opportunity to do something interesting at the Armory since it will also be a Sports Center. Plinths or cheek blocks in the design showed that there is room for free standing sculpture.

The Commission concurred in the use of Occoquan brick in the courts, to be faced with sand lime brick.

Next the Commission considered the revised design that had been requested by the Commission at the September meeting for the principal facade, showing the omission of a secondary break. Mr. Wyeth showed the Commission the design and said he was not in favor of doing this. The sketches had been sent to the architect members of the Commission for study and Mr. Shepley and Mr. Borie agreed with Mr. Lamb, who expressed himself on the subject as follows:

> I have received the plans for the D. C. Armory together with copy of Mr. Wyeth's letter. I do not agree with him that the omission of the secondary break in the entrance feature harms the design. On the contrary I think there is a distinct improvement in its scale. However, I think this should be discussed further at the meeting on the 20th. I am returning the print herewith.

The Commission thereupon decided that the secondary break should be omitted. A report was sent to the Commissioners of the District of Columbia. (Exhibit E) The secretary was requested to send copies of the letters received from the Citizens Associations to the Engineer Commissioner of the District of Columbia. (Exhibit E-1)

6. NEW WEATHER BUREAU BUILDING: Mr. Louis A. Simon, Supervising Architect, presented a design for a new building for the Weather Bureau to be located in the same square with the old building at 24th and M Streets, N. W. He said: "This is a neighborhood emerging from one of small residences to an automobile supply area. We thought of using salmon colored red brick with a brown joint. The building has to be built in three stages and perhaps four." Mr. Clarke remarked that it is a pretty sordid part of the city and the new building would doubtless help to improve appearances. Mr. Simon said the Weather Bureau is really like an industrial plant--it isn't an office building--they make forecasts; they have drafting rooms, a printing press, observation station on top and instrument rooms.

Mr. Borie and Mr. Shepley inspected the design and considered it to be satisfactory. The design was an improvement on the existing red brick building.

Mr. Clarke asked that a sample of the brick to be used be submitted to the Commission. Mr. Simon said he thought of using red brick similar to that which has been used for the new Government Printing office annex.

The Commission approved the design with the provision that a sample of the brick will be submitted to the Commission. (Exhibit F)

7. WASHINGTON NATIONAL AIRPORT: Mr. Louis Simon, accompanied by Colonel Le Roy Barton, Technical Adviser, Federal Works Agency; also Mr. Howard Cheney and Mr. W. B. Foster, Consulting Architects, and Mr. Hauk of the Civil Aeronautics Authority, submitted designs for the terminal building and annex for the Washington National Airport.

Mr. Clarke said the National Capital Park and Planning Commission and themselves acting jointly at the September meeting approved the new location of the Mt. Vernon Highway; that very day they heard from the press that the Civil Aeronautics Authority were given the buildings of the Public Roads Laboratory so the next day they retracted their action with regard to the relocation of the highway. Mr. Clarke asked if the location of the Mt. Vernon Highway conforms to the plans of the Bureau of Public Roads and it was said that it did so. Mr. Bouche, landscape architect for the Supervising Architects Office, was present and submitted a landscape plan for the grounds. This showed the new location for the Mt. Vernon Highway and indicated the location of possibly six hangars at Four Mile Run on the Alexandria side of the Airport. It was said it will not be possible to see the hangars except in going north from Alexandria to Washington. Mr. Clarke made several suggestions and pointed out that the roadways in front of the terminal building should be 36 feet wide, allowing for three lanes of traffic and it would be better to omit a pool indicated in front of the terminal building. Terraces were shown to be at four-foot levels.

Colonel Barton presented designs of the hangars. All the members of the Commission were well pleased with the design. Mr. Manship said: "I think they are the most interesting hangars I have seen yet. The silhouette is very good." The design of the hangars was thereupon unanimously approved. The hangars will measure approximately 240 by 200 feet and will be 55 feet high with sliding doors. The roof will be of corrugated metal, aluminum painted or coated.

Next Colonel Barton submitted a design for the Terminal Building, which was examined by the Commission. As to material of construction the Commission were informed that it would be concrete, possibly precast concrete, such as was used at the Naval Testing Basin at Carderock. The Commission discussed precast stone and disapproved its use for the terminal building, stating that in their opinion it looks monotonous and is of doubtful durability. Mr. Clarke recommended that a study be made with a view towards using reinforced concrete poured into forms with undressed lumber on the exposed side, and in this the Commission concurred. He believed that it would look very well to use board marks for this type of building.

The Commission were generally well pleased with the design of the building and approved it.

Mr. W. E. Reynolds, Commissioner of Public Buildings, then joined the discussion, and expressed his appreciation of the approval of the design submitted by his office, and commented on his experience in constructing concrete buildings in different parts of the country. Mr. Reynolds said: "We have no contractors who can pour concrete; for the Government Printing Office they spent as much money for poured concrete as they would have on limestone.

The parking problem at the airport was then considered. Mr. Clarke advised that the roadways at the traffic circle be increased to 36 feet in width so as to provide three adequate lanes. The design of the traffic circle (300 feet in

diameter) was considered to be good. Mr. Clarke suggested the use of grass and trees only for planting this area.

A report was sent to Mr. Reynolds accordingly. (Exhibit G; see also G-1)

8. MEMORIAL BUILDING TO VETERANS OF THE CIVIL WAR: The Commission considered Senate Joint Resolution No. 61 and also House Joint Resolution No. 86 (Exhibit H) proposing the erection of a memorial building to the Veterans of the Civil War. The Commission decided to report that in the event Congress enacted legislation in the form of Senate Joint Resolution No. 61, the Commission would cooperate to the fullest extent to select an appropriate location and also determine the character of the building; the Commission hoped they would be consulted in the matter of selecting an architect. A report was sent to Congressman Keller accordingly. (Exhibit H-1)

9. BILL PROVIDING ALTERNATE STRUCTURAL DESIGN: The Commission considered a bill, H. R. 7568, referred by the Hon. Fritz G. Lanham, providing alternate structural designs. The Commission discussed the bill and felt it would be highly inadvisable to have it enacted since it might lead to serious trouble. It was pointed out that the Government might be at work on a design at the same time that a private architect would be involved in the project and might result in a law suit against the Government. Mr. Clarke said: "I am desirous of getting the Government out of the architectural business because I don't think committee architecture is desirable. However, we cannot allow interference by an outside architect when the government is doing the work." The Commission decided to have their views expressed in a draft of a letter which would be given final consideration at the next meeting of the Commission. (Exhibit I)

10. PORTRAIT OF CHARLES MOORE: Mr. Clarke reported that he had received a letter from Senator Barkley indicating he was heartily in favor of the legislation providing for a portrait of Mr. Moore painted by authority of Congress.

The secretary said that Congressman Keller gladly endorsed the bill and the draft probably would be amended to state "Charles Moore, former Chairman of the Commission of Fine Arts".

11. SMITHSONIAN GALLERY OF ART: Mr. Clarke called attention to a letter he had received from Mr. F. A. Delano (Exhibit J) concerning plans for the Smithsonian Gallery of Art. Mr. Clarke said that the letter is in relation to a personal and confidential letter that he sent to Mr. Delano last July. (Exhibit J-1) The Commission concurred in the suggestion of Mr. Clarke that since Mr. Delano has made this a matter of official record, the Chairman's personal letter to Mr. Delano on the same subject should also be placed on the record. (Exhibit J-2)

12. SECOND DIVISION MEMORIAL: Mr. Donald L. Kline, Landscape Architect, submitted in behalf of the office of National Capital Parks, a suggestion to make the legend on the Second Division Memorial more legible. After discussion it was decided to use 22 K gold leaf.

13. MARCONI MEMORIAL: Mr. Manship reported that he had called on Mr. Piccirilli recently to see his model for the Marconi Memorial. This is to consist of an allegorical figure in bronze resting on a pedestal with a bust of Marconi in stone in front of it. Mr. Manship said there had been some criticism about the scale of the figure. It seemed large and Mr. Piccirilli had reduced its scale. Mr. Manship said that the figure is going to look much better and it is a nice thing as he has modeled it.

14. PURCHASES FOR THE FREER GALLERY OF ART: The Commission called on Dr. John Lodge to inspect a number of works of art proposed for purchase for the Freer Gallery as follows:

1 Scroll painting by T'ang Yin, 1466-1524, Chinese, Ming dynasty.

1 Scroll painting by Wang Meng (died 1385), Chinese, Yuan dynasty.

1 Miniature painting, Indian, Mughal, 16th century.

14 Pieces of I-hsing pottery, Chinese, Ming dynasty, 16th-17th century.

The Commission were delighted to see them and they were approved.

Thereupon Dr. Lodge stated that there was still need of a fence around the Freer Gallery to give it proper protection and there are funds available for it as well as the design by Mr. Platt. The Commission decided to take up this matter at the next meeting.

15. MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE UNDERPASS AND THE NEW PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE BRIDGE: The Commission inspected with Captain Whitehurst, Director of Highways, the work under way at the Massachusetts Avenue Underpass at Thomas Circle. The Commission had no criticisms to make and were well pleased with the project.

At the new Pennsylvania Avenue Bridge, which in accordance with an Act of Congress will be known as the John Phillip Sousa Memorial Bridge, it was seen that about half of the bridge is nearing completion. Captain Whitehurst said that this provides for a 26-foot roadway, which is two feet wider than the existing old bridge. After the first half has been built the old bridge will be torn down. He thought the new bridge would be completed in about a year. The Commission felt that the design by McKim, Mead and White for the bridge is being carried out well.

16. JOHN MARSHALL STATUE: The Commission were in conference with Justice Stone and Justice Roberts representing the members of the United States Supreme Court in the matter of relocating the statue of John Marshall, which is now on the west terrace of the Capitol Grounds, on the Supreme Court Grounds, in accordance with pending legislation, H. J. Res. 260, as follows:

> Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the Architect of the Capitol is authorized and directed to move the statue of John Marshall from its present site on the Capitol Grounds to a new site either on the grounds of the Supreme Court Building or on the Capitol Grounds between the Capitol and the Supreme Court Building. Such new site shall be selected by the United States Supreme Court.
>
> SEC. 2. There is authorized to be appropriated such sum as may be necessary to carry out the provisions of this joint resolution.

Mr. Manship reported that after an inspection of the grounds and the entrance hall of the Supreme Court Building, he felt it would be very appropriate to place the John Marshall Statue in the marble foyer at the entrance to the Supreme Court Building. The hall is 30 feet wide, 30 feet high and 148 feet long. On the way to the Supreme Court Building the Commission inspected the John Marshall Statue. The pedestal is about 8'8" long by 6'7" wide and 7'4" high and the bronze figure of John Marshall is 7'1" high. Mr. Manship felt that the height of the existing pedestal might be reduced about a foot and that then the statue would be of proper height in the hall (the hall is 165 feet long). It was also suggested that if the engineers report that the floor is not strong enough to hold the existing pedestal, a marble panelled pedestal could be used instead of solid marble. Both Justice Stone and Justice Roberts felt that John Marshall was worthy of placing in the Supreme Court Building since he is always referred to as "The Great Chief Justice". Also they felt that the large hall looks empty. The Commission suggested to Mr. Waggaman, U. S. Marshal, that Mr. David Lynn, the Architect of the Capitol, bring the statue over to the Supreme Court Building and place it on a temporary pedestal; otherwise that full sized solar prints of a front view and a side view be made of the statue for inspection and consideration at the next meeting.

17. LIGHTING OF MERIDIAN HILL PARK: As had been arranged by the office of National Capital Parks, with the advice of Mr. Peaslee, about seven o'clock in the evening Mr. Clarke, Mr. Shipley and Mr. Manship inspected the lighting of the Lower Garden and the cascades of Meridian Hill Park. Mr. Gartside, the Acting Superintendent, reported that he had used only incandescent lights with crystallized reflectors, submerged in the water. The members of the Commission were much impressed by the effect and thought that the lighting had been well

done. A few suggestions were made, which were embodied in a memorandum by Mr. Peaslee. (Exhibit K)

Mr. Cartside reported that the cost of lighting has amounted to only about $7.00 an evening and indicated that it could be made a permanent feature. Also he said that since the park has been lighted, residents of the locality have taken a much greater interest in it and the park has been well attended on a number of evenings recently.

Thereupon Mr. Peaslee brought up the question of relocating the statue of Joan of Arc for he felt it should be located at the north end of the park, giving it a much better setting than it has at present. At the present location room would then be available for band concerts which were originally planned at the location now occupied by the statue. It was decided to consider this matter at the next meeting of the Commission.

The Commission adjourned at 7:00 p. m. to meet in Washington on Friday, November 17th.

C O P Y

October 7, 1939.

Mr. Charles Moore,
Gig Harbor,
Washington.

Dear Mr. Moore:

It is my understanding that when October twentieth rolls around you will be eighty-four years young. It is indeed pleasant to all of the present members of the Fine Arts Commission, to all former members, and to your host of friends to know that you are well and enjoying life in a remote (to us) but delightful part of the country. You are still a member of the National Commission of Fine Arts and you have made a record of long service that will never be again recorded, so on this your Birthday accept the felicitations of the Fine Arts Commission which I venture to express formally but nevertheless sincerely.

It is pleasant to know that you are actively engaged writing a book on the general subject of the early days of the Commission of Fine Arts. All of your friends are looking forward with much anticipation to seeing the book in print, and we rejoice that time has not dulled your memory of the fruitful days which you spent in the service of Washington.

With kindest regards from all of your colleagues on the Commission, and with personal best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

(Signed) Gilmore D. Clarke,

GDC:MVL

EXHIBIT A

October 20, 1939.

Memorandum for the Commission of Fine Arts:

In connection with the recent Convention of the American Institute of Architects a group of architects (consisting of Alfred Kastner, Miss Cloethiel Woodard, Norman Hansen and others) arranged an exhibition which was placed on display in the Gridiron Room of the Willard Hotel. The purpose of this exhibit was to deride the L'Enfant Plan and the McMillan Plan, find fault with the plans of the National Capital Park and Planning Commission. The Federal Housing Administration supplied the material for the exhibit. For the most part they used posters.

The charge was made that the L'Enfant Plan is out-of-date, imperialistic, and that Washington is a city for tourists, the needs of the residents having been neglected. They took scarcely any notice of the great work begun in 1901 by the McMillan Commission to restore the L'Enfant Plan and adapt it to the entire District of Columbia; and to the achievements made in carrying out the Public Buildings Program during the past decade. They say there is no city-wide plan, and what is needed is as follows:

Neighborhood Plan Housing Plan Health Plan Education Program

Traffic Program Business Program Industry Program Housing Survey

Recreational Program

A controversy has developed in the Washington Chapter of the A. I. A. concerning this matter. Partridge, Peaslee, Sullivan, Wyeth, Waddy Wood (as also Charles Eliot) and other conservative architects have strongly defended the work of the National Capital Park and Planning Commission and the Commission of Fine Arts. The "rebels" (as Peaslee called them) now propose to send their exhibition to 20 or 25 cities through the American Federation of Arts. The question arises whether a "traveling exhibition" on Washington should be prepared, sponsored by the National Capital Park and Planning Commission and the Fine Arts Commission.

(Signed) H. P. Caemmerer,
Secretary.

EXHIBIT B

C O P Y

October 24, 1939.

Dear Sir:

With reference to Application No. 790 for the erection of the Lafayette Building at 811 Vermont Avenue, blueprints of which you submitted to the Commission of Fine Arts on October 14, I have to inform you that the architects, A. R. Clas Associates of the Shoreham Building have written the Commission that they wish to submit a model of the building. This model will arrive in Washington early in November and it has been decided to hold the next meeting of the Commission in Washington on Friday, November 17. The Commission feel that it would be inadvisable to report on the blueprints until an inspection of the model has been made. We therefore respectfully ask that you hold up the matter of a permit for erection of the superstructure until the Commission reports to you on November 17.

Sincerely yours,

(Signed) H. P. Caemmerer,
Secretary.

Building Inspector,
District of Columbia,
District Building,
Washington, D. C.

EXHIBIT C

Randle Highlands Citizens' Association

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

WASHINGTON, D. C.

dent
ADELBERT W. LEE

t President
A. I. WILSON

cutive Secretary
MISS MARTHA R. FISHER
607 30th Street S. E.

ording Secretary
ARTHUR HOYLE
597 Naylor Road S. E.

surer
J. H. McCALL

gates to the Federation
Harry L. Stebbin
G. E. Pray

Committee Chairmen

mbership
Arthur Hoyle

blic Schools
Harry L. Stebbin

ways
G. E. Pray
ice Chairman
F. Updike

ning
V. R. Soper

ws and Legislation
Arthur B. Hansen
Vice Chairman
H. E. Miller

blic Reservations
A. H. Bacas

blic Health & Sanitation
R. A. Elmore
Vice Chairman
H. M. Frazier

ice and Fire Protection
J. F. Soresi

dicary
A. S. Pierce

ngraphs
C. T. Curtis
Vice Chairman
Clarence Hatton

ding
A. B. Jordan

orations
A. E. Hoyle

nking
Mrs. Eleanor H. Lynham

Special Committees

ge Committee
Adelbert W. Lee

October 10, 1939

Fine Arts Commission
District Building,
Washington, D.C.

Attention: Mr. H. B. Cammerer, Secretary,

Dear Mr. Cammerer:

This Association and it's officers took an active part in the campaign to procure the appropriation of funds with which to construct the District National Guard Armory at the end of East Capitol Street, and it was with considerable interest that we noted funds had been procured. We have also been advised of the rumor that it is now planned to construct the building of brick rather than stone. Certainly, a brick structure does not have the monumental appearance that a structure as important as the Armory, should have. Our citizens in the Eastern part of the City are proud of that section and desire to have attractive buildings constructed therein, and I sincerely appeal to you and the other members of the Fine Arts Commission to use your good offices in seeing that only a building of stone structure be permitted.

Thanking you for your interest in the matter and for past courtesies, I am,

Sincerely and respectfully yours,

ADELBERT W. LEE, President,

AWL:BB

EXHIBIT D

Southeast Business Men's Association, Inc.

Organized 1924

WASHINGTON, D. C.

(Member Federation of Business Men's Associations)

LOUIS F. FRICK, SECRETARY

124 7TH ST. S. E. - PHONE LIN. 7797

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Clarence F. Dunahoe
First Vice-President
Arthur E. Shaffer
Second Vice-President
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Dan Reynolds
A. W. Lee
Delegates to Fed. of B.M.A.
Clarence F. Dunahoe
Louis F. Frick
Arthur Shaffer
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Joe Milazzo
J. H. Johnson
Public Health
Dr. H. K. Butler, Chairman
Dr. J. C. Pyles, Vice-Chairman
Captain Joseph Morgan
Charles Zurhorst
Banks and Banking
R. J. Coyle, Chairman
Bernard M. Grant

October 19, 1939

Mr. H. P. Cammerer, Secretary,
Commission of Fine Arts,
Washington, D. C.

Dear Sir:

At its last monthly meeting this Association was advised that it has been proposed to use brick in connection with the construction of the new National Guard Auditorium.

As it is not believed that the use of brick in connection with the construction of this auditorium will be in keeping with the development planned for tthe end of East Capitol Street, this Association urges that the construction be carried out in accordance with the original plans by using marble or granite.

Respectfully,

A. J. Shaffer

A. J. Shaffer, Pres.,
614 Pa. Ave., S. E.

EXHIBIT D

C O P Y

November 1, 1939.

Dear Sirs:

The Commission of Fine Arts at their meeting on October 20, considered the design and model of the District of Columbia Armory to be built at the end of East Capitol Street.

The question of omitting the secondary break in the facade was given particular consideration by the architect members of the Commission and they felt that this omission distinctly improved the scale. The revised design omitting the secondary break was therefore approved.

In the matter of material for the building, the Commission prefers that it be faced in either limestone or granite. The Commission would be willing to consider the use of brick if it is of a character to match a sample in the office of the Commission. Brick possessing such a character has a monumental quality similar to granite. The Commission would not be willing to approve either red brick or shale brick and call attention to the fact that the Armory will set the standard for additional public buildings at the end of East Capitol Street.

The Commission approve the use of asbestos protected metal roofing, aluminum painted or foil covered.

The Commission suggest that one per cent of the total authorization be set aside for sculpture, painting or other ornamentation and decoration outside or within the building. This is a practice recently adopted by the Supervising Architects Office with good results. In the case of the Armory there would be exceptional opportunity for interesting sculpture since it is also to be a sports center.

For the Commission of Fine Arts:

Sincerely yours,
(Signed) Gilmore D. Clarke,
Chairman.

Board of Commissioners
District of Columbia
Washington, D. C.

EXHIBIT E

C O P Y

October 24, 1939.

My dear Colonel McCoach:

I have been requested by the Commission of Fine Arts to bring to your attention the inclosed copies of letters from the Randle Highlands Citizens Association and the Southeast Business Men's Association, Inc., in which they recommend the use of monumental material for the construction of the District of Columbia Armory.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) H. P. Caemmerer,

Secretary.

Colonel David McCoach,
Engineer Commissioner,
District of Columbia,
Washington, D. C.

EXHIBIT E-1

C O P Y

October 27, 1939.

My dear Mr. Simon:

The Commission of Fine Arts at their meeting on October 20, 1939, approved the design you submitted for the new building to be built for the United States Weather Bureau.

The Commission would be pleased to see a sample of the brick you propose to use.

For the Commission of Fine Arts:

Respectfully yours,

(Signed) Gilmore D. Clarke,

Chairman.

Hon. Louis A. Simon,
Office of the Supervising Architect,
Federal Works Agency,
Washington, D. C.

EXHIBIT F

C O P Y

October 28, 1939.

My dear Mr. Reynolds:

The Commission of Fine Arts, at their meeting on October 20, 1939, considered the design submitted by your office for hangars and a Terminal Building at the Washington National Airport. The Commission thought that the design for the hangars was eminently satisfactory and approved it. It was noted that the hangars will be built at the south end of the Gravelly Point site, facing south.

The design for the Terminal Building was also approved. It was suggested that a study be made with a view toward using reinforced concrete poured into forms having undressed lumber on the exposed side. The Commission thought that this might be an appropriate material in the circumstances.

The scheme for the development of the grounds was approved; this included the relocation of the Mount Vernon Highway. The suggestion was made that the width of the roadways at the traffic circle be not less than 36 feet.

For the Commission of Fine Arts:

Sincerely yours,
(Signed) Gilmore D. Clarke,
Chairman.

Hon. W. E. Reynolds,
Commissioner of Public Buildings,
Federal Works Agency,
Washington, D. C.

EXHIBIT G

FEDERAL WORKS AGENCY

PUBLIC BUILDINGS ADMINISTRATION

WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER

October 30, 1939

RECEIVED
THE COMMISSION OF FINE ARTS
OCT 1939

Mr. Gilmore D. Clarke, Chairman,
Commission of Fine Arts,
Interior Department Building,
Washington, D. C.

My dear Mr. Clarke:

We are pleased to acknowledge your letter of October 28 wherein you advise that the Commission of Fine Arts has considered and approved the design submitted for hangars and terminal building at the Washington National Airport.

The promptness with which you acted upon this matter and your approval is particularly gratifying to this office.

Very truly yours,

W Elmer Reed

Commissioner of Public Buildings.

EXHIBIT G - 1

76TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. J. RES. 61

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JUNE 15, 1939

Referred to the Committee on the Library

JOINT RESOLUTION

Establishing the Ladies of the Grand Army of the Republic National Shrine Commission to formulate plans for the construction of a permanent memorial building to the memory of the veterans of the Civil War.

Whereas the Ladies of the Grand Army of the Republic at their forty-ninth convention, held in Grand Rapids, Michigan, in September 1935, believing that the time had arrived when the citizens of this Republic should erect a memorial to the veterans who saved this Union, created a commission composed of certain members, to be known as the Ladies of the Grand Army of the Republic National Shrine Commission, to formulate plans for the erection of a memorial building in the city of Washington, District of Columbia; and

Whereas seventy-four years have passed and today we stand a united country, and no more lasting or beneficial memorial could be erected than a building containing an auditorium

EXHIBIT H

providing a suitable arena for symphony concerts and other useful and patriotic purposes, and where the relics and records of the Civil War could be preserved for posterity: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That there is hereby established a commission, to be known as the Ladies of the Grand Army of the Republic National Shrine Commission, to be composed of nine persons, three members of said organization to be appointed by the President of the United States; the President of the Senate; the Speaker of the House; Alben W. Barkley, Senator from Kentucky; Joseph C. O'Mahoney, Senator from Wyoming; Clarence Cannon, Representative from Missouri, and John W. McCormack, Representative from Massachusetts. The commission shall serve without compensation.

SEC. 2. It shall be the duty of the commission to procure and determine upon the location, plan, and design of a memorial building to be located in the city of Washington, District of Columbia, and to avail itself of the services and advice of the Fine Arts and the National Capital Park and Planning Commissions.

SEC. 3. (a) Without regard to civil-service laws or the Classification Act of 1923, as amended, the commission is authorized to appoint and prescribe the duties and fix the

compensation of a director and such other employees as are necessary in the execution of its functions.

(b) The commission may make such expenditures as are necessary to carry out the intent and purposes of this resolution, including all necessary traveling and subsistence expenses incurred by the commissioners.

SEC. 4. There is hereby authorized to be appropriated the sum of $50,000 to carry out the necessary expenses of the commission herein established.

SEC. 5. The authority granted under this joint resolution shall expire upon completion of the duties herein authorized.

Passed the Senate June 13, 1939.

Attest: EDWIN A. HALSEY,

Secretary.

76TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. J. RES. 61

JOINT RESOLUTION

Establishing the Ladies of the Grand Army of the Republic National Shrine Commission to formulate plans for the construction of a permanent memorial building to the memory of the veterans of the Civil War.

JUNE 15, 1939
Referred to the Committee on the Library

C O P Y

October 25, 1939.

My dear Mr. Keller:

The Commission of Fine Arts at their meeting on October 20, 1939, had under consideration Senate Joint Resolution No. 61 and a similar bill, House Resolution No. 86, concerning the erection of a permanent memorial building for the Veterans of the Civil War.

The Commission respectfully advise that in the event the Congress shall enact the legislation in the form of Senate Joint Resolution No. 61, the Commission of Fine Arts will cooperate to the fullest extent with a view to selecting an appropriate location and also in determining the architecture of the building, and with the hope that the Commission will be consulted concerning the selection of an architect.

For the Commission of Fine Arts:

Sincerely yours,

(Signed) Gilmore D. Clarke,

Chairman.

Hon. Kent E. Keller,
Chairman,
Committee on the Library,
House of Representatives,
Washington, D. C.

EXHIBIT H-1

DRAFT OF LETTER

October 1939.

My dear Congressman Lanham:

The Commission of Fine Arts at their meeting on October 20, 1939, had under consideration H. R. 7568, a bill "Providing for Alternate Structural Designs".

The Commission of Fine Arts have gone into this matter with great care and are impressed with the fact that the procedure suggested in the bill providing for alternate structural designs is very complicated and probably could never be worked out satisfactorily with the intent that the author of the bill contemplated. There is no halfway mark in this matter; either a building is designed by the Government or it must be designed by a private architect.

For the Commission of Fine Arts:

Sincerely yours,

Gilmore D. Clarke,
Chairman.

Hon. Fritz G. Lanham,
Chairman,
Committee on Public Buildings
and Grounds,
House of Representatives,
Washington, D. C.

EXHIBIT I

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION
Washington, U. S. A.

Washington, D. C.
October 9, 1939.

Hon. Gilmore D. Clarke,
Chairman, National Commission of Fine Arts,
101 Park Avenue,
New York, New York.

My dear Mr. Clarke:

I duly received your letter of July 22, written en route Naples, and I have read and considered it very carefully. I assume that you wrote as a matter of record and in order to put the Commission of Fine Arts in what you consider to be the proper light. Because I know you, I accept it in that spirit, although I do not think that the Saarinen plan or any plan was before your Commission. Indeed, you recognize this in your statement. On the other hand, you remember that I invited you to appear informally before the Jury of Award in order that you might express your views before a decision was arrived at. I thought then that it might do some good and I was sorry that you did not avail yourself of my invitation in the spirit in which it was intended.

Now we come to the matter of the Competition provided for in the Act of Congress. Under date of May 25, 1938, I made a memorandum in re the Proposed Gallery of Modern Art which had theretofore been authorized by Congress. I am enclosing a copy of this memorandum, but I am not sending it to you because I am particularly proud of it as a document but in order that you may know what was before the Smithsonian Board of Regents, the Smithsonian officials, and finally, the Smithsonian Gallery of Art Commission as set up in the Act of Congress. What I tried to make clear in this document were the functions which the proposed Gallery was to carry out and I stressed the point that the building should be a low building and the reverse of a monumental structure. In order to present the subject honestly to the Smithsonian Commission, I read the memorandum aloud and when I had completed my reading, I was surprised to have Mr. Borie say that he agreed with every word of it. This was really very much more than I expected and led to the general approval by the others present without much discussion. Doctor Abbot qualified his approval by saying that he did not think a building of my plan would be large enough for the purposes; but it was on the basis of the acceptance of my preliminary statement that there was further discussion of this type of a low building and that the specifications for the competition were drawn to provide for a building to perform the functional needs indicated.

C O P Y

EXHIBIT J

During all of these discussions, Mr. Edward Bruce took a prominent part, partly because he had fathered the legislation and had promised that he would do his best to secure private funds to build the Gallery. Furthermore, he was the man who was very keen for the provisions of the Act setting up the Gallery as a clearing house for art and stressed the importance of having it a gallery where pictures and other works of art could be received, viewed and sent on. He wanted to create in Washington, as the chief framers of the Act agreed, not a "static" gallery of art but one which would be changing and giving new men and new methods a chance. I joined Mr. Bruce in this idea and I felt that carrying out the functions of the building was more important than a building of monumental proportions and design.

In California lately, I was talking to the architect of the Henry E. Huntington Library and Art Gallery in San Marino, near Los Angeles, and he said that he had been told before he undertook the plan that he must see the important libraries of the east. He inspected a number of them and found that in many cases they were beautiful buildings but very ill-designed for their function as libraries. I recently had a chance to go into Mr. Morgan's library on 36th Street in New York, built by Mr. Charles McKim, and there again I could not help but say to myself "a beautiful building, both inside and out, but wholly unsuited for a library".

Returning to your letter, I do not think you sufficiently appreciate that only the successful competitor for a design was chosen. He was not given a commission to build the Gallery and, in fact, he was told, as others were told before and after the competition, that we could not build the Gallery until we secured funds to build it with. I think we could raise a million dollars or more to build a building which functionally would do the job we have in mind; but if we undertake to build one of the kind you evidently have in mind, it would probably cost four times that amount, and we might not be able to get the money.

You mentioned in one of your paragraphs that a theater has no place in an art gallery. I should say that that was a question to be decided by the Smithsonian people, not by the Commission of Fine Arts. They decided that they wanted a theater attached to the gallery, and I think, considering the educational work which we propose for this gallery, it should have a theater in which to display works of art and discuss them in an appropriate auditorium.

Finally, we come to the work of building the building. I am well aware that if and when we get money to build the Gallery of Art, we are bound to employ Mr. Saarinen. Whether that time is in the near future or some years off is not yet certain, but it is quite certain that when that time comes the then Smithsonian Gallery of Art Trustees will be bound to tell Mr. Saarinen the type of building they want. They will warn Mr. Saarinen that his design must not only be of the size and character to carry out the functions which they desire but

that it must also meet the artistic views of the Commission of Fine Arts. If the Commission of Fine Arts is still of the opinion that we must have a building to compare in size or form with the Mellon Gallery, we of the Smithsonian Commission will perhaps decide to build somewhere else where we can have the kind of structure we want for our own purposes. I do not at all entertain the views you do about the type of building which should be built, or that it should conform with the buildings now on the north side of the Mall. The two bands of trees should make possible a different treatment on the north and the south side of the Mall, and yet I am aware that approval of the Commission of Fine Arts will at least be desirable. I do not pretend to be an architect or an artist, and I am not going outside my own responsibility to find fault with the Commission of Fine Arts. I do think that there ought to be development in art as there is in engineering and other sciences. I have, for example, seen much in the art of Asia and India to admire, but I would hate to build that type of building in the Mall to perform the functions of a Gallery. Likewise, while I admire the Greek temples and Roman development of Greek architecture, or admire the products of the Gothic period, I do believe that architects should be given a chance to see how they can meet the desires of the Government in carrying out the functions of the proposed building and still get something of acceptable appearance. The old Smithsonian buildings, the New National Museum, the Freer Gallery of Art were all considered fine buildings when they were built, and they are of interest as evidences of the ideas of the period in which they were built, but they do not fit together in the same picture, and it is just as well that they are separated quite widely by trees and shrubs.

Sincerely yours,
(Signed) Frederic A. Delano,
Chairman, Smithsonian Gallery
of Art Commission.

Enclosure.

A TENTATIVE MEMORANDUM IN RE THE PROPOSED GALLERY OF MODERN AND OTHER ART WHICH HAS JUST BEEN AUTHORIZED BY ACT OF CONGRESS

Under the Joint Resolution recently passed, $40,000 is appropriated for preparing the plans for this Gallery, but the Gallery itself is to be built from private subscriptions which we believed are available.

The authorization under this Act permits the National Capital Park and Planning Commission to suggest a site in the Mall between 4th and 14th Streets, and the President to assign it to the Smithsonian Institution when an adequate sum of money shall have been raised.

There are only two adequate sites available. One is the large site on the north side of the Mall, opposite the Department of Agriculture and on the south side of Constitution Avenue. This site is very large, being approximately 1,000 feet long and 500 feet wide. On account of the height of ground it should be reserved for a building of at least two or three stories high, the lower story being on the level of Constitution Avenue, and the second story on the level of the North Mall Drive.

The other site is the two blocks between 4th and 7th Streets on the south side of the Mall and north of Independence Avenue, which can be treated either as a single unit or dealt with as two units, - one east and one west of 6th Street. It is not essential that 6th Street should be maintained because of the fact that the new National Gallery of Art (the Mellon gift) has required the closing of 6th Street as a thoroughfare. If these two blocks are treated separately, the length of the one between 6th and 7th Streets is 500 feet, while that between 4th and 6th Streets is 600 feet, and the two together, including 6th Street, are approximately 1200 feet.

It has been pointed out that a monumental building, built similar to the new Mellon Gallery, would cost far more than can probably be raised by subscription; whereas a building adequate in character and appearance could be built at least on one of these blocks for a much smaller sum. Therefore, until occasion and opportunity develop for a structure adequate to the site, it would seem reasonable to utilize this desirable location for a building of the exposition type. As an indication of the specifications for the type of building I have in mind, I offer the following tentative suggestions.

1. That we adopt the type of construction which has been used in the best of the buildings constructed in recent World's Fairs; for example, at Chicago in 1893 and in 1933, and at San Francisco in 1916. In many of these structures, not only did the style of architecture command respect, but they have proved to be most practical buildings. Under the proposal I have in mind, the building would be built close to the ground level and without excavation except for such basement facilities under the central portion as might be required for heat, light, repair shops, utilities, and storage.

The mass of the structure, although perhaps thrice the length of the Freer Gallery, could continue the long, low line which that structure has established on the south side of the Mall.

2. I would propose a building with steel-truss roof, windowless walls, say 25 to 35 feet high, sky-lighted, thereby gaining maximum exhibition space.

3. The materials of construction, whether concrete faced with marble or concrete without facing, should be of such restrained design as to blend inconspicuously in the Mall grouping. The long facade might properly be relieved by plane changes leaving intermediate panels which would serve as a simple background for planting, as was so effectively done at San Francisco.

4. I would propose that the building I have in mind would serve its purpose effectively for many years and yet be no disgrace to its surroundings. Assuming that the outside walls of the proposed buildings would be 30 or more feet back from the sidewalk lines, we could have, even on a single block, a building say 400 feet long and 300 feet wide, and as the structure is top lighted (say saw-tooth with north light), the entire enclosure would be usable except for such courts or open spaces as might be desirable for breathing spaces. The plan of construction would permit an immense amount of wall space which could be added to from time to time by light partitions separating the immense halls into alcoves of convenient size for the purpose for which they were needed. Furthermore, a gallery around the outside walls, 10 to 12 feet wide, would supplement the exhibit space for many small models, dioramas, and other exhibits suitable for such a location.

5. Many exhibits, such as paintings, engravings and the like, might properly be in racks where they could be readily rolled out for special exhibits and conveniently stored in the interim. (Note the experience of the Fogg Art Museum at Harvard, and of the Library of Congress (Prints Division).

6. I would propose to light such a building entirely by sky light, as already stated, and by dividing the roof into east and west panels of convenient length, a continuous saw-tooth roof, not visible from the street, would furnish north light to the entire building.

7. It is assumed that such a building plan, even if 6th Street is not closed, might provide for two buildings, if needed, instead of one continuous building, each with entrances on all four sides.

8. The plan of the structure should be so simple as to be convenient and free from confusion. It is realized that as our museums are becoming constantly larger, it is important to make them more convenient and accessible to people of

advanced years and to invalids who, above all, should be given the opportunity of enjoying them. This, it is believed, can best be achieved by the type of building I have suggested, first, because it does not require climbing a flight of steps to enter the building, and, secondly, because rolling chair service can readily be used just as is done in all of our exposition buildings. In this connection, it may well be asked why, when such facilities are essential elements of temporary expositions, so little attention has been given to the comfort of visitors in the permanent exhibition halls of our Nation's Capital.

THE MARINERS' MUSEUM
Newport News, Virginia

February 22, 1938.

Mr. Frederic A. Delano, Chairman
National Park & Planning Commission
Interior Building
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Delano:

We have now collected sufficient information for reply to your letter of January 27, 1938, addressed to Mr. H. L. Ferguson, relative to the type of construction used in our Museum building.

There is enclosed a copy of Mr. Ferguson's paper read before The Society of Naval Architects and Marine Engineers, in which there is a floor plan of the building and some interiors.

As the building was erected in three sections as money was available, a description of the main display room would seem to cover your wishes.

The main display room is built with concrete floor resting on earth fill to give an elevation above the outside ground of about 12 inches.

The main room is 53'10" wide by 161' long by18' to the underside of the truss. Joined on to this main room at one side adjacent to the front end is a section 38' wide by 31'-10" long by 12'6" high to the underside of the truss. In front of the room is a lobby 34'-6" wide by 18' deep by 19'6" high to the underside of the roof slab, which in the lobby is flat.

The main room and the side wing are built of solid brick walls to the underside of the peaked truss. The walls are 12½" thick with pilasters projecting 4½", both inside and outside, under each truss. The distance between trusses varies from 12'9" to 15'6". This odd spacing was made necessary by the fact that we had to join to an existing building. If the building had been constructed separately, we would have spaced the trusses 16' apart.

The slope of the roof is 4¼" in 12". The roof is composed of an inside course of 1/4" thick smooth face asbestos, which has built on to it 1/2" Celotex insulating board. On top of this inside course is laid 2-5/8" pitch corrugated asbestos roofing sheets of an average thickness of 5/16".

Since there are no windows, all light is furnished by four rows of 3'6" clear opening continuous skylights, two rows on each side of the ridge. These skylights are fitted with actinic glass to minimize glare and heat rays.

The inside of the walls is laid up with smooth mortar joints, while the outside is laid with squeezed joints. Upon completion the outside of the walls was given two spray coats of cement wash mixed with "anti-hydro". There is no plastering in the building, the walls merely being painted.

The cost in this vicinity is about 30 cents per cubic foot, including heating plant.

Yours very truly,
(Signed) W. GATEWOOD, Manager.

WG/MMT-2

C O P Y

En Route Naples
July 22, 1939.

PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL

My dear Mr. Delano,

The Commission of Fine Arts met on Thursday the 20th in Washington and, among other matters, took up the subject of the Smithsonian Gallery of Art. The Saarinen drawings were borrowed for the occasion and, in addition, we looked carefully over a model of the Mall on which Partridge had fashioned a Smithsonian Gallery at the appropriate scale. The Commission were conscious of the fact that the problem was not before them formally and therefore adjourned the meeting before entering upon the discussion of the competition, so there are no minutes, no record of these particular deliberations.

Henry Shepley explained carefully that the jury was faced with the problem of choosing the best design from among ten submitted and in this, I think, the other members of the Commission agreed. Nevertheless every other Commissioner, including the Chairman, was emphatic in expressing an opinion of disapproval of the design judged the winner as one totally unsuited for the Mall.

The Commission of Fine Arts must continue to act to retain a harmony of expression in the buildings to be erected in Washington, more particularly those along the Mall. The Saarinen design for an art gallery is not considered suitable and in the judgment of others with whom I have talked, including a number of gentlemen whose views you respect, it must not be carried out as at present planned nor with the same or similar flavor of modernism.

This design is not conceived in the same philosophy which has obtained for other buildings of a public or semi-public nature in Washington. For example, it is factory-like in appearance and construction, quite obviously a steel frame with a thin stone and glass veneer, whereas all of the other buildings have, or appear to have, structural bearing walls. The ribbon windows on the Mall elevation are offensive; the scale of the design is diminutive in comparison with the Mellon Gallery which, I must admit, is much larger than I like.

Now there must be a graceful way out of a difficult situation; I made a suggestion to the Commission which I trust may aid in solving the problem. My suggestion is to arrange matters so that

EXHIBIT J-1

the Regents of the Smithsonian Institution accept the competition as one to choose an architect rather than to choose a design. It can be made perfectly clear that the designers in the competition did not have sufficient time at their disposal to properly and adequately solve so important a problem and further, that the whole program requires careful review, more particularly concerning whether or not a theatre has a proper place in an art gallery on the Mall. (I talked to Mr. F. P. Keppell and also to Herbert E. Winlock of the New York Metropolitan Museum of Art; each one is of the opinion that a theatre has no place in an art gallery). Thus the Regents may declare Saarinen and his associates the architects of the building. They, the architects, may then proceed to make further and more thorough studies based upon a new program to be developed and with a more profound conception of the environment. There is little doubt that the competitors "played up to the jury", a perfectly natural thing to do since all of the professional members except Shepley are known to be confirmed modernists.

It may seem to you to be a contradiction that the Commission of Fine Arts vigorously objected to the Jefferson Memorial, a classic "steal" if you please, and then later object to this new architecture of the Saarinens. Well, that seems to the Commission to be a perfectly consistent policy; it shows that there is a sound middle ground which we must explore. We all feel that the Saarinens are thoroughly competent to develop a satisfactory design which possesses freshness, but which may, at the same time, harmonize with the older neighbors on the Mall.

I commend this idea to you. I do not know just what the procedure might be, but I venture to suggest that the winning design, submitted in the competition, be referred to the Commission of Fine Arts for a report before the Regents take any further action.

Judging from reactions that have come to my attention as the result of publishing the final competition designs, if any attempt is made to carry out the present Saarinen design on the Mall, the explosion that follows will make the Jefferson Memorial controversy sound like a half-penny firecracker in comparison.

I am most appreciative of the courtesy recently extended to me to attend the meeting of the National Capital Park and Planning Commission for the purpose of taking part in discussions concerning the new Navy Building and the relocation of a section of the Mt. Vernon Highway. I am sure my presence helps to keep the Commission of Fine Arts informed in these matters of interest to both Commissions.

I am on my way to Italy for a rest and if the Duce keeps peace for the rest of July and August I'll return to New York about the 20th of that latter month.

With best wishes,

Sincerely yours,
(Signed) Gilmore D. Clarke.

COPY

October 30, 1939.

My dear Mr. Delano:

I received your letter of October 9, concerning the Smithsonian Gallery of Art, together with its inclosure, which you sent to me in reply to my letter addressed to you on the subject on July 22, while en route to Naples. I shall be glad to confer with the members of the Commission of Fine Arts concerning the project.

Sincerely yours,

(Signed) Gilmore D. Clarke,

Chairman.

Hon. F. A. Delano,
Chairman,
National Capital Park
and Planning Commission,
Washington, D. C.

EXHIBIT J-2

Copies of Mr. Labatut
Mr. Caemmerer

Copies to Mr. Gartside
Mr. Clark
Mr. Harding
Mr. Stevens
Mr. Kline

MEMORANDUM re Meridian Hill Park:

This memo of record relates to a discussion, Friday evening, October 20th, with members of the Fine Arts Commission--Mr. Clarke, Mr. Shepley, Mr. Manship.

The reaction of the Commission members to efforts at illumination of the water features appeared to be highly favorable. The only comments made were directed toward supplementing what has already been done.

It was suggested that all the recessed low curb and wall lights be provided with hoods to reduce visibility: and that those lights on or near the north-south axis, on both sides of the large pool, be blanked.

The proposed lighting of the exhedra was regarded as desirable; and there was some discussion about possibility of lighting the sphere. Study might also be given to possibilities of back-lighting the urns and terminal obelisks of the exhedra.

In connection with exhedra, question arose about the height of enframing hedge, previously discussed. Mr. Shepley agreed that it should be raised around the semi-circle to the top of the urns; and that back of the obelisks the transition might be covered with a big "blob" of planting. This will be discussed later. Meanwhile, the big tree back of exhedra, on west side of axis, should be cut and the weak sections of hedge, strengthened.

Outlining of the two pools with lights is OK. The top basin of the cascade, with under-arch complication is not right. The basin remains too black but the dead-end under arch must not be revealed. Could a hooded light be placed on under side of arch to shine forward on the water without illuminating the back wall?

Terrace standard lights should be hooded to obscure spotting from south view. Overhead lighting in general should receive the study suggested by Mr. Labatut.

It was agreed that the two terminal fountains should be lighted. Try a ring for the jets and a hooded light or lights for the under surface of each bowl. Is it possible to drill basins to avoid conspicuous light line?

Lighting of the 16th Street niche was commended; but I am not yet satisfied with the effect of the water - the jets seeming too thin in contrast to those in the lower garden with their bulk and bubbles. Why not try a center suction jet in addition to the enclosing ring, combining bubbles with the general verticality already achieved?

Lighting of the north entrance still seems a bit strong--especially in the eyes of those ascending from the street or descending from the park. Shields of obscure glass at the west and south sides might serve to reduce the glare. Need of additional step lights was noted at lower garden entrance and elsewhere. Comment was made that the public comfort station signs were needlessly conspicuous.

EXHIBIT K

Idea of covering north entrance niche with a mass of vines was liked. While these are in process of growing, isn't it possible to bring patched cement work around the fountain head to uniform color? What about water supply? Daily hosing might be as satisfactory as constant drip, if a damp condition can be maintained.

The members of the Commission expressed general agreement with the idea that the statue of Joan of Arc is out of place on the terrace; and interest in the plan for the north end of the park, combining a scaled-down site and an adequate north closure for the mall. It was agreed to schedule this item for the November 17th meeting of the Commission for which studies should be prepared. Sketch plan discussed with members individually is being sent to Mr. Kline for development.

In addition to restudy of north end, submission should include proposal for supplementary lines of trees along mall to afford morning and afternoon shade for mall seats; transitional planting between concert grove and terrace; and proposed treatment for mall hedge terminals for play areas.

Reference is made to plans filed several years ago for low concert platform centering between elms on north side of terrace and connecting present detached sections of parapet. Particular attention is directed to need of formal hedge line to back up north mall seats of terrace.

There was some discussion about design--gap between cascade enframing walls and nearby holly hedges. Idea of wider holly hedge of tree-size was discussed briefly but held for daylight study on the 17th.

Mr. Manship was interested in park sculpture possibilities, especially relating to the 16th Street niche; the present form of which is definitely tentative. (Reference is made to previous casual studies and to Commission expression thereon, particularly a decorative band and panel treatment which might be dug out of files for review.)

Mr. Manship was especially interested in establishing the "scheme for sculpture" which I proposed several years ago. He is planning to come down before the Commission meeting and spend part of the day with me looking into the possibilities. I will need the report referred to and sketches which indicate projected decorative accessories such as urns for hedge niches, trash receptacles with recessed lighting pockets, oil-jar studies and estimates, etc.

For this sculpture study, we should have a small portfolio containing, in addition to the foregoing items and to the Joan of Arc layout, the small-scale plan of the park, the large-scale planting plan, the elevation of a Euclid Street niche; and a detail of the second entrance on 16th Street, south of Euclid Street, together with plans of the south terminal of the west-ascent axis, and of the intersections of transverse hillside axis with cascade walks, for which oil jars were recommended.

It seems to me that we have made excellent progress in bringing to a head various problems in connection with Meridian Hill on which we have been working

for years. I am delighted to work with everyone concerned in reaching decisions and I hope that each major or minor item, which we have discussed may be cleaned up as we go along. I believe that it would be a good idea to leave the temporary lighting arrangements in place until the 17th, carrying out as many as possible of the suggestions made, so that we may have the benefit of one more display and criticism before we proceed to finals.

(Signed) Horace W. Peaslee.

October 24, 1939.